

Doing Less with Less: Implications of Resource Driven Strategy for the United States Army

by

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United States Army War College
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USAWC CIVILIAN RESEARCH PROJECT

**DOING LESS WITH LESS: IMPLICATIONS OF RESOURCE DRIVEN STRATEGY
FOR THE UNITED STATES ARMY**

by

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United States Army

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ABSTRACT

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Due to this mismatch, the Army will be required to develop plans for doing less with less. Viable options exist including a reduced full spectrum capability; focusing on defend, shape and respond; or focusing on defend, deter and defeat. All three have advantages, disadvantages, and associated risk. The course of action selected will have major implications for Army long term manning, training and equipping efforts as well as the future role of National Guard and Reserve forces.

The Army is fully capable of meeting this challenge. By operationalizing the problem and employing the proven doctrinal concept of mission command, Army leaders will be able to make sound decisions and move the Army forward. The Army will do its share to help the country solve its fiscal crisis and continue to defend our Nation and win its wars.

DOING LESS WITH LESS: IMPLICATIONS OF RESOURCE DRIVEN STRATEGY FOR THE UNITED STATES ARMY

As a very important source of strength and security, cherish public credit. One method of preserving it is to use it as sparingly as possible, avoiding occasions of expense by cultivating peace, but remembering also that timely disbursements to prepare for danger frequently prevent much greater disbursements to repel it.....

- George Washington, farewell address.¹

A categorical shift in the determination of military requirements from the current approach of 'strategic guidance' to that of 'available resources' will have serious implications for the United States Army. Even the most optimistic budget projections render current strategic guidance unrealistic. As a result, the United States Army must determine what should be done before deciding what should be cut. Several feasible courses of action are available. This paper examines three; maintaining a full spectrum capable Army at reduced levels, focusing on the most likely threats and conflicts over the next decade, and orienting on less likely but most dangerous threats to US vital national interests. Each course of action has advantages, disadvantages and attendant risk. A well informed decision on the future roles and missions expected of the Army will effectively drive manning, training and equipping efforts in a reduced resource environment. Budget cuts in the absence of realistic strategic guidance will place the Army and ultimately the Country's national interests at risk.

This paper is not designed to provide a detailed budget analysis or make specific recommendations on force structure and weapons programs. It seeks to make the case that the realities of our economic situation will result in resource driven strategy, a paradigm shift. As a result, the Joint Force and specifically the Army will be forced to choose from three potential courses of action over the next decade. Army leadership

should view this challenge as a mission and utilize the elements of mission command to lead the force through this challenging but manageable process.

Review of strategic guidance

Even a cursory review of current strategic guidance makes it clear that the US Military and the Army in particular is over tasked given projected funding. This section looks at four strategic documents and summarizes critical overarching military tasks and guidance.

The May 2010 National Security Strategy (NSS) envisions “ a world in which America is stronger, more secure, and is able to overcome our challenges while appealing to the aspirations of people around the world.”² It clearly links this vision to a requirement to grow our economy and reduce the national deficit. The strategy states unequivocally that the United States will continue to underwrite global security through commitment to allies and partners, defeating al-Qa’ida and deterring aggression and proliferation of the most dangerous weapons.³

The NSS lays out four enduring national interests:

- Security: The security of the United States, its citizens, and U.S. allies and partners.
- Prosperity: A strong, innovative, and growing U.S. economy in an open international economic system that promotes opportunity and prosperity.
- Values: Respect for universal values at home and around the world.

- International Order: An international order advanced by U.S. leadership that promotes peace, security, and opportunity through stronger cooperation to meet global challenges.⁴

The NSS describes a whole of government approach to maintaining these enduring interests. Defense, diplomacy, economic, development, homeland security, intelligence, strategic communications and the American people and private sector are all essential elements of a holistic effort. Defense responsibilities are further delineated as winning ongoing wars, preventing and deterring threats, defending the United States, excelling at counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, and stability operations while ensuring readiness to address the full range of military operations, support civil authorities at home and finally, to preserve and enhance the long term viability of our force.⁵

The NSS establishes clear national interests and stresses the importance of and interdependency between our economy and security. Under the whole of government approach, the responsibilities assigned to the U.S. military are extensive and wide ranging. Additionally, the document fails to effectively prioritize military missions and does not reconcile an exhaustive task list with fiscal challenges.

The February 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) Report, although it preceded the 2011 NSS, more thoroughly balances the dual challenges of security and available resources. It lays out two clear and overarching objectives, further rebalancing defense capabilities to prevail in current wars while building the capability to deal with future threats and further reform Department of Defense institutions and processes to support the warfighter, buy weapons and spend tax dollars responsibly.⁶

The QDR acknowledges the United States as the only nation capable of projecting and sustaining large scale operations over extended distances, and the responsibility to be good stewards of the associated power and influence we possess. The QDR lists four priority objectives:

- Prevail in today's wars.
- Prevent and deter conflict.
- Prepare to defeat adversaries and succeed in a wide range of contingencies.
- Preserve and enhance the All Volunteer Force⁷

The document directs significant enhancements in the following key mission areas: defend the United States and support civil authorities; succeed in counterinsurgency (COIN), stability and counterterrorism (CT) operations; build the security capacity of partner states; deter and defeat aggression in anti-access environments; prevent proliferation and counter weapons of mass destruction; and operate effectively in cyberspace.⁸

The QDR directs changes to guide the evolution of military components. It describes ground forces capable of full spectrum operations with a focus on COIN, stability and CT operations, naval forces that can provide presence and project power, air forces that are more survivable and possess greater range, flexibility and versatility, Special Operations Forces with increased capability, and enhanced enabling systems for all of the above.⁹

Building on the four enduring national interests and objectives in the NSS and the QDR, the 2011 National Military Strategy (NMS) of the United States provides the ways

and means by which the United States Military will advance those interests and accomplish directed defense objectives.¹⁰ It describes a strategic environment shaped by demographic trends, the relationship between security and prosperity, weapons of mass destruction, access to the global commons, and non-state actors.¹¹ The NMS lists four National Military Objectives:

- Counter Violent Extremism.
- Deter and Defeat Aggression.
- Strengthen International and Regional Security.
- Shape the Future Force.

Countering violent extremism requires the military to disrupt, dismantle and defeat al Qa'ida and their affiliates in Afghanistan and Pakistan and prevent their return. Additionally, we must be prepared to find, capture and kill violent extremists wherever and whenever they threaten U.S. interests. The military must strengthen and expand partnerships and build capacity of those partners. The military must also remain prepared to respond to any attack when directed.¹²

The NMS describes the U.S. as a “security guarantor” and as such, requiring a Joint Force capable of deterring and defeating aggression. Deterrence is as important as winning wars and far less costly. The military, in conjunction with the U.S. Interagency and partners and allies must continue to deter nuclear and conventional threats both through our own nuclear arsenal and our conventional forces. Furthermore, “the core task of our armed forces remains to defend our nation and win its wars.”¹³ As such, the NMS directs the military to be able to provide capabilities,

acting unilaterally if required, to defeat adversary aggression. This requires a Joint Force capable of power projection, forcible entry, maintaining access to the global commons and cyberspace and the ability to fight and win when contested.¹⁴

The intertwined nature of U.S. interests, and the security and stability of a broader international system, require leadership and a Joint Force capable of strengthening security across all regions. The NMS identifies tasks and responsibilities related to international and regional security geographically – North America, South and Central America and the Caribbean, the Middle East, Africa, Europe, Asia and the Pacific, and functionally – addressing natural disasters and responding to transnational challenges, theater security cooperation and humanitarian assistance and security sector assistance.¹⁵

The final objective discussed in the NMS is the requirement to shape the future force. In terms of people, the Joint Force must continue to develop leaders who can outthink adversaries while gaining the cooperation of partners. These leaders must also maintain the trust and confidence of elected leaders and the American public. The second component of people is the All Volunteer Force that must represent the country it defends and be sustained and strengthened. Shaping the future force also requires capabilities and readiness. The NMS directs a Joint Force comprised of modular, adaptive, general purpose forces capable of the full range of military operations. Specifically in regards to the Army it requires land forces that are full spectrum capable, versatile, tailorable and networked, and also able to sustain rotational operations. The final aspect of shaping the future force is the requirement to maintain readiness. The

military must be able to provide and integrate forces, systems and capabilities required by Combatant Commanders to accomplish their assigned mission.¹⁶

Most recently, in January of 2012, the President issued Defense Strategic Guidance (DSG) as a direct response to the Budget Control Act directed cuts to defense spending. Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense is intended to set priorities that protect the country and sustain U.S. global leadership.¹⁷ The DSG focusses the Joint Force geographically, prioritizing rebalancing toward Asia and the Pacific, maintaining focus on the Middle East, maintaining but evolving commitments in Europe, and being the security partner of choice in the rest of the world.¹⁸ It also makes two significant concessions, first that the prior two major war planning assumption is no longer feasible, and second that we can no longer afford to scale ground forces for long term stability operations.

The DSG lists ten primary missions, not prioritized, for the Armed Forces that will protect U.S. National interests and accomplish the objectives for the 2010 National Security Strategy. The missions are:¹⁹

- Counter Terrorism and Irregular Warfare.
- Deter and Defeat Aggression.
- Project Power Despite Anti-Access/Area Denial Challenges.
- Counter Weapons of Mass Destruction.
- Operate Effectively in Cyberspace and Space.
- Maintain a Safe, Secure and Effective Nuclear Deterrent.
- Defend the Homeland and Provide Support to Civil Authorities.

- Provide a Stabilizing Presence.
- Conduct Stability and Counterinsurgency Operations.
- Conduct Humanitarian, Disaster Relief and Other Operations.

The DSG concludes with principles that will guide the Joint Force of the future. The military must maintain a broad range of capabilities that offer versatility across a wide range of missions. The guidance stresses the importance of maintaining the ability to regenerate capability and reverse force reductions if required by strategic realities. It stresses the importance of resisting the temptation to reduce readiness at the expense of force structure. It describes the need to continue “reducing the cost of business” and the importance of preserving the All Volunteer Force. It directs the Department of Defense to examine the mix of active component and reserve component forces and capabilities. The importance of retaining and building on advances obtained during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and networked approach to deterrence and warfare are stressed. Finally, the DSG acknowledges the importance of maintaining an adequate industrial base and continuing to invest in science and technology.²⁰

The preceding summary of the NSS, QDR, NMS, and DSG is not intended to be a detailed analysis or a critique of the quality of the guidance. Rather, it serves the purpose of describing the sum of missions and tasks, both unconstrained and constrained by fiscal realities that are either the direct responsibility of the US Military or require military contribution. For the purposes of this paper, the roles, missions and tasks found in these four three strategic documents will be grouped as follows, **Defend** the Homeland, **Deter** Aggression, **Defeat** Adversaries, **Shape** the Environment, and **Respond** to Crisis.

Budget Analysis

Having examined the current strategic guidance and the expectations of the United States Armed Forces in regards to achieving the associated objectives, it is necessary to examine the budgetary aspect of that guidance. While the documents summarized above do not address the current budget challenges in great detail and will surely require adjustment in the near future, the guidance, goals and missions they contain are still valid and are best viewed as optimal and unconstrained. It is therefore logical to examine the fiscal feasibility of the sum of the strategic guidance.

This paper does not make major assumptions regarding savings realized by reforming military pay and benefits. On one hand, the fact that military pay and benefits account for 34% of the current DoD base budget and that military health costs have more than doubled over the past decade are extremely significant.²¹ On the other hand, these types of cuts are extremely contentious and any congressman who advocates and supports these types of cuts will be subject to extreme criticism from veterans groups and will be portrayed as anti-military, anti-service member and anti-military family. Cuts to pay and benefits that are of a large enough nature to significantly impact the fiscal aspect of this study are unpredictable at this time.

While the Budget Control Act of 2011 and the possible consequences of sequestration are the current elephant in the room, the long term economic prognosis based on fiscal reality and history is more troubling in regards to defense spending. The current economic crisis is undeniably significant for both the country and the Defense Department, and anticipated cuts to defense spending will surely be painful.

Beginning with efficiencies gained through better practices and eliminating waste, Secretary Panetta seeks to eliminate \$60 Billion dollars over the next five years on top of \$150 Billion in the same type of savings identified by Secretary Gates last year.²² A complication during this belt tightening effort is the issue of wear and tear on equipment following a decade of war. The Marine Corps and Army alone estimate the cost of repairing and replacing war damaged equipment at \$30 Billion.²³

The first round of cuts under the 2011 Budget Control Act will reduce defense spending 10% in real terms relative to 2011. Sequestration would result in cuts of approximately 16% relative to 2011 and return defense spending to 2006 levels.²⁴ Estimates by defense experts vary, but the Department of Defense will experience spending reductions in the range of \$350 Billion to \$1 Trillion over the course of the next decade. Cuts of this magnitude are dramatic but not unprecedented.

A historical examination of defense reductions, especially in post war periods is warranted. For context, current defense spending equals 4.7% of GDP including 1% for war spending. An additional 1.5% of GDP is currently allocated to other security including international affairs, intelligence, homeland security and veteran's affairs for a total of 6.2% of GDP.²⁵ Current defense spending is the highest in real terms since WWII and slightly lower than the 7% of GDP spent during the Cold war. Over the last 50 years spending on defense peaked at 9.3% of GDP in 1962 and was at its lowest in 2000 at 3% of GDP²⁶. Wars are traditionally followed by reductions in spending. Following the Cold War, defense spending was reduced a total of 34% over a 13 year period from 1985-1998. Reductions following the Viet Nam War and Korean War were 26% and 53% respectively. A fundamental difference between the current projected

reductions and those following previous wars is personnel endstrength. Increases in funding for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan did not result in a significant increase in manning. While the drawdowns following recent conflicts were accomplished with reductions to endstrength, Korea 31%, Viet Nam 43%, and Cold War 36%, the endstrength is essentially the same now as at the beginning of the current conflicts so manpower reductions are not a practical option for major savings. From a historical perspective, the Defense department should realistically expect to operate in a significantly resource constrained environment and face new challenges in regards to finding ways to reduce spending.²⁷

The reality of our Nation's fiscal situation does not bode well for defense spending and a prudent approach would be to assume constant and enduring reductions to the amount we as a Nation can spend on security objectives and the forces required to accomplish them. In a June 2011 Long Term Budget Outlook, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) examined two fiscal scenarios. Under the "extended baseline" scenario which uses current laws and policies, defense spending drops from 4.7% to 3.6% from 2021 to 2036 with that 3.6% including any war costs. This scenario would also increase publicly held U.S. debt from 69% to 84% of GDP in 25 years.²⁸

The second scenario, "alternative fiscal scenario", makes more realistic assumptions about future policies concerning tax increases and spending cuts and savings. The alternative fiscal scenario also projects a 3.6% of GDP allocation to defense spending but projects publicly held debt to exceed 100% by 2021 which would have potential serious consequences to the country's fiscal health. The CBO concludes

that a sustainable economic path would require increasing revenues and/or decreasing spending by 4.9% of GDP which is **more than three times** the adjustment required by the Budget Control Act of 2011. A shift of this magnitude would result in a sustained level of defense funding of between 1.6% and 2.6% of GDP depending on how the burden is distributed between revenue increases and cuts to mandatory programs, non-defense discretionary spending and defense spending.²⁹

The Department of Defense faces immediate and pressing fiscal challenges in the near term. Historical precedent and the reality of the severity of our Nation's fiscal health offer a pessimistic view of long term funding for defense and security. The entire country will be required to make significant adjustments and the Department of Defense will share in this burden. It appears indisputable that the Armed Forces will be less capable. The challenge then becomes resisting the desire to do everything with reduced resources and instead figuring out how to do less with less.

In light of painful near term and long term reductions in spending, the strategic guidance summarized earlier will need to be adjusted. The Army should shape the discussion, debate and adjustment to National and military strategy. Doing so will require determining which roles and missions will be prioritized and the associated risk and implications for future manning, training and equipping efforts. The following section looks at courses of action using the previously defined objectives of **Defend, Deter, Defeat, Shape** and **Respond** as essential responsibilities of the Army.

Strategic Planning Models

For the purpose of this discussion, it is important to describe and clarify two strategic planning models. A *Strategic Guidance* model is objective based. Planners receive guidance and devise a strategy that establishes objectives whose accomplishment will result in a desired endstate, or set of conditions, that realize the strategic goals. In terms of ends, ways and means, the strategic guidance model is ends based, with the realities of resources being limited to decisions regarding means used and ways in which they are employed and utilized.

A *Resource Based* model is fundamentally different in that available resources and capabilities drive the development of a strategy from the beginning. Strategic goals and objectives are constrained in the development process by assets and resources made available to planners. In terms of ends, ways and means, the resource based model is means based.

The fundamental challenge facing National and Military leadership is to determine whether to approach security and military strategy by determining what we have to do to afford the right strategy or by deciding what strategy we can afford. The following courses of action assume the latter given the timing of strategic guidance, directed reductions in Defense Budgets, and the current fiscal situation.

Potential courses of action

Determining the way ahead for the Army to meet strategic guidance and objectives, within the fiscal realities of funding over the next decade is an extremely

complex problem. Large and extremely competent teams of staff officers and analysts are dedicating countless hours to this task. However, the essential task in this effort is to determine what we want the Army to do for the country before we determine what and how the Army will cut.

There are essentially three feasible courses of action the Army can pursue. The first is to maintain a full spectrum capable³⁰ Army at a smaller size and with less capacity, but still proficient at all current assigned tasks and mission sets. The second is to focus on the most likely threats and missions over the next decade. The third course of action is to reset and retrain the Army for combined arms maneuver³¹ warfare in order to prepare for and meet any threat to U.S. vital interests. Using the summary of national and military strategic guidance described earlier, these courses of action will be further described in terms of Defending the Homeland, Deterring Aggression, Defeating Adversaries, Shaping the Environment and Responding to Crisis.

There are clearly some commonalities between the courses of action. The Army must and will continue to care for Soldiers, families, wounded warriors and veterans and as such, this requirement is not a variable in the courses of action discussion that follows. Also, while the Army is clearly a component of the total joint force, these courses of action focus on the Army and do not attempt to describe or assign missions and responsibilities in detail to other components. Regardless of how the Army is organized and equipped the force must be both deployable and sustainable. Maintaining the professionalism of the force and developing leaders are essential and remain non-negotiable. Finally, because of the significance and supremacy of the

mission to defend the United States of America, all three courses of action include this mission and place it first in order of importance.

A Reduced Full Spectrum Approach - Defend, Deter, Defeat, Shape and Respond:

The Army is capable of maintaining all current mission sets albeit at a reduced level. The degree of reduction will ultimately be determined by funding and by the prioritization of tasks. Under this course of action, the Army will institutionalize the hard learned COIN lessons of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan while simultaneously retraining combined arms maneuver and preparing a portion of the force for high intensity conflict. Units would maintain competency across the full spectrum of military conflict and focus their training and preparation for a specific conflict once notified for a deployment.

The advantage of this course of action for the Army is that it maintains flexibility for civilian leadership and positions the Army to meet the widest array of challenges. It acknowledges the low success rate in predicting future conflict and maintains proficiency in a wide range of tasks. The main disadvantage of pursuing a reduced full spectrum capable force is best summarized by the timeless military adage that he who defends everywhere defends nowhere. The realities of future defense funding and the Army's portion of those limited resources will translate to significant reductions in all five core missions. The Army will train, man and equip the force for a wide range of missions and tasks. This will complicate every effort, from developing leaders to future equipment and vehicle decisions.

The risk associated with this course of action lies in the areas of vital national interests and training. While a major challenge to U.S. vital national interests is unlikely over the next decade, it is possible. A flexible but smaller and less capable Army, focused on full spectrum operations runs the risk of being unable to rapidly meet and defeat a serious threat to the United States. Two major wars or multiple lesser adversaries seeking to take advantage of the U.S. being involved in one major war could present challenges that rapidly exceed the portion of the Army trained and ready for high intensity conflict. Training a force in multiple and extremely diverse missions presents significant challenges. Schools, doctrine, time and resources are easily dispersed to the point that true proficiency at any one task is difficult to obtain and even more challenging to sustain.

A Likely Threats Approach - Defend, Shape and Respond:

The potential for an adversary to challenge the United States on land in a conventional conflict is extremely low over the next decade. In this course of action the Army will meet homeland security requirements and then focus remaining assets and resources on shaping the complex global environment and responding to crisis when directed. This approach acknowledges that maximalist approaches to manning, training and equipping are no longer affordable and focusses limited resources on the most likely challenges. The Army will continue to grow and further develop capabilities developed during recent wars such as security force assistance, stability operations and counterinsurgency. This course of action prioritizes the importance of working with allies and partners as well as the U.S. interagency. Combined arms maneuver and

reestablishing proficiency for high intensity combat will be limited to a small number of units designated as reserve and quick reaction forces.

There are several advantages to this approach. First, by narrowing the required missions and tasks, the Army better concentrates limited resources. Defend, Shape and Respond also aligns the Army with the most likely scenarios it will face. The ability to shape the environment by working with allies and partners is increased. The Army is also prepared to respond to crisis both humanitarian and kinetic but not meeting the threshold of high intensity conflict.

This course of action also has disadvantages. Over the course of ten years of war, Army proficiency at combined arms maneuver and the readiness of the equipment required for these operations have atrophied. More importantly, the officers and Non – Commissioned officers (NCOs) who remain in the Army with the necessary experience to retrain the force in combined arms maneuver are senior now. Their numbers are continuing to drop and those who remain will continue to gain rank. The Army has a relatively small window of opportunity to leverage their experience to retrain combined arms maneuver. Additionally, high intensity combat is extremely technical and complex and the cost of failure can be catastrophic in terms of blood and treasure compared to COIN and stability operations.

The risk associated with this course of action is twofold. Like the reduced full spectrum course of action discussed earlier, there is potential for an Army focused on Defending, Shaping and Responding to fail when forced to confront a major threat to U.S. vital national interests exists. Defend, Shape and Respond also moves the Army

away from its historical core competency, fighting. While challenging and important, COIN and Stability operations are not what the majority of Soldiers enjoy or join the Army to do³². The U.S. Army is a values based organization and fighting insurgencies using that approach is difficult and has never been successfully accomplished. Stability operations are often viewed by Soldiers as police functions and the responsibility of other government organizations. Moving too far away from the Army's historic role of conventional warfare places the Army's ability to attract and retain Soldiers who embody the warrior spirit that makes the American Soldier the most lethal weapon on the battlefield at risk.

A Vital Interests Approach - Defend, Deter and Defeat:

The Army's no fail mission is to defeat threats to vital US interests. It is in essence a contract with the American people and one that the Army has never failed to meet. The Army could choose to pursue a course of action that meets homeland security requirements and resets and retains the force for combined arms maneuver in a major conflict with an overarching goal of deterring aggression and when required dominating and defeating adversaries. Limited resources will focus on manning, training and equipping efforts in support of combined arms maneuver. Hard learned lessons in counterinsurgency and security force assistance will be captured in updated doctrine and trained as part of leader education but not routinely trained by units. Stability operations and crisis response remain feasible, but require significant time for specific mission related training. Military to military engagement will be limited and focused on combined arms maneuver training but still feasible in high payoff cases.

The major advantage of this course of action is that it guarantees the Army will be able to meet any challenges to U.S. vital interests including two major theater war scenarios and multiple simultaneous challenges even while engaged in a major conflict as suggested recently by Michael O'Hanlon.³³ While any future conflict has components of stability operations and possess asymmetric threats, the decisive phase will require dominant land forces as described in this course of action. This approach is rooted in the historical military precedence that only dominant land forces can guarantee accomplishment of military objectives.³⁴ It emphasizes deterrence and reassures key allies. The Army will also benefit across all systems, from Soldier to weapons, from a dedicated reset period and aggressive but focused training plan. Disadvantages are not insignificant with this course of action. The U.S. will largely lose the Army as a shaping tool and be forced to rely on other services, diplomatic, and developmental efforts to shape the environment. Any efforts to conduct COIN and stability operations will require long train up periods and significant investment in equipment.

While this course of action is low risk in regards to protection of U.S. vital national interests, it does present significant risk. Most notably, it places low priority on the most likely threats over the next decade which, along with a reduction in missions will weaken the Army in inter-service competition for resources and portion of allocated defense budget. Additionally, should the Army pursue this course of action it runs the risk of civilian leadership continuing to assign shape and respond tasks that prevent the accomplishment of deter and defeat training and equipping objectives.

Course of Action Comparison

The following table compares the three courses of action by summarizing advantages, disadvantages and risk.

	Advantages	Disadvantages	Risk
Reduced Full Spectrum	Flexibility Meet wide array of challenges Maintain wide range of proficiency	Lack of focus Reduction in all core missions Complicated leader development / acquisition	Ability to meet major challenge to vital interests Time and resources to train all requirements
Likely Threats	Concentrates resources Realistic threat based Ability to shape and respond	Loss of CAM experience Loss of technical Expertise for CAM	Ability to meet major challenge to vital interests Recruiting and retention / warrior spirit
Vital Interests	Meet any challenge to vital interests Deterrence Reassures Allies	Loss of shaping and engagement Long train up for non – CAM missions	Inter-service resource competition Mission overload / mission creep

A reduced full spectrum Army provides National leadership with the most flexible force, one that would be capable of meeting a wide range of challenges and maintaining proficiency at all core missions. This force would have less capability and requires acceptance of risk in regards to the unlikely but potentially catastrophic risk associated with a major challenge to vital U.S. interests. An Army oriented on the most likely threats the country will face over the next decade would benefit from focused mission sets and have a robust capability to shape the environment and respond to crises around the world. This force would be less capable in terms of combined arms

maneuver and this critical competency will further decrease over time given loss of experienced leaders. Like the reduced full spectrum option, the most likely threat approach requires the acceptance of risk in terms of vital U.S. interests. Focusing the Army on threats to vital U.S. interests provides the most security and protection for the country, provides the highest level of deterrence and would reassure allies. However, this course of action severely limits the Army in terms of relevance in any scenario other than high end conflict against a near peer competitor. This course of action also places the Army at risk in terms of inter-service competition for limited resources and being assigned more likely missions, such as COIN, stability operation or response to crisis, that it is unprepared to accomplish. The final decision will ultimately be made by the President, Secretary of Defense and the Chief of Staff of the Army based on national security strategy, the global environment, threat assessments and willingness to accept risk.

Implications

Regardless of which of the above courses of action the Army chooses to pursue, or any other course of action for that matter, there are significant implications. While these implications will be wide ranging and complex, the most challenging are manning, training, equipping and the role of the Army National Guard and Army Reserve. Each of these areas is discussed below with an analysis at the end of how Reserve Component forces can reduce the impacts.

Manning:

The Army will get smaller in terms of personnel strength based on budget projections and because endstrength is one of the major ways to reduce spending. Current plans reduce the Army to pre-war levels and will cut endstrength further once defense authorizations are finalized. Recruiting and retention will remain critical manning challenges as the Army moves forward as will reducing the number of Soldiers in the force who are unable to deploy. These challenges need to be addressed regardless of course of action chosen. The main variable in manning is where and how to assign available endstrength.

COIN and stability operations are command and control intensive and require multiple echelons of headquarters with both functional and geographic responsibilities. Transition Teams, Provisional Reconstruction Teams and other liaison and advisory positions are intensive in these operations. These requirements argue for retaining headquarters, more field grade and senior NCO authorizations and institutionalizing Security Force Assistance³⁵ positions.

The Brigade Combat Teams (BCT) is the base formation in the Army. If pursuing a Defend, Shape and Respond approach, the BCT requires significant manning improvements. Examples are addition of a Battalion level Headquarters to improve command and control, establishing permanent advisor and training units within the BCT, increasing military intelligence and military police allocations, and adding linguists. Less BCTs with more Soldiers makes sense in this course of action.

Combined arms maneuver in high intensity conflict is combat power intensive. Soldiers in squads, platoons, and companies with robust enablers win battles. Pursuit

of a Defend, Deter and Defeat course of action will result in a dedicated effort to eliminate redundant and non warfighting headquarters. Every effort should be made to retain the number of BCTs and to man them at the highest level possible.

Internal to the BCT, thickening existing formations is more important than adding headquarters given finite endstrength. Larger squads and platoons in light infantry BCTs and adding armor and combat engineer companies to existing battalions in heavy BCTs as well as increasing military police and chemical manning in both are examples. Reestablishing Artillery and Engineer Brigades in Divisions and re-establishing habitual relationships between Divisions and Logistical and Aviation units will also be prudent given this approach.

Training

The Army's approach to training will vary greatly based on the course of action chosen. Training is resource intensive in terms of both dollars and time. Particularly challenging will be how the Army chooses to address the current state of units that are very proficient at COIN and stability operations but whose combined arms maneuver skills have atrophied after ten years of war. This problem is time sensitive in that the leaders with prior experience at combined arms maneuver are rapidly advancing towards retirement or getting promoted to the point that they are no longer assigned at BCT level and below and are therefore not available to act as primary trainers.

If the Army focuses on near term threats and the most likely forms of conflict, then sustaining and improving COIN and stability type skills is prudent. Cultural, language, reconstruction, policing and training of host nation militaries skills require

extensive training. The requirement for Soldier proficiency in basic warrior tasks and unit requirements for collective warfighting skills will remain. Wide Area Security³⁶ tasks will require extensive training at the unit level.

Restoring the Army's proficiency at combined arms maneuver will require an extensive and deliberate training effort. The warfighting skills and capabilities that made the Army so dominant during Desert Storm and the initial invasion of Iraq were the product of the best training possible which was developed and refined over several decades. While the Soldiers and leaders are arguably even better today given their combat experience, and current Army equipment remains the best in the world, dominant combined arms maneuver proficiency has not been a training priority. Prior to September 11, 2001, Army units trained combined arms maneuver exclusively and constantly to gain and then sustain proficiency. Defend, Deter and Defeat as a selected course of action will require the commitment of all available individual, leader, and collective unit training time and resources.

A decision to pursue a reduced full spectrum capability will require the Army to accomplish both sets of training tasks discussed above. It will result in a reduced level of proficiency in a wider range of tasks, long train up periods for units who receive specific deployment orders for either type of conflict, or the designation of units as either COIN/Stability forces or Combined Arms Maneuver forces, all sub optimal solutions.

Equipping:

The procurement of equipment and associated research and development consumes a major portion of the Defense budget. This is especially true over the past

decade when procurement funding increased 97% in real terms and Research, Development, Testing and Evaluation (RDT&E) funding increased 67%.³⁷ The realities of projected funding for the Army mean that future procurement efforts must be both effective and efficient. Making mistakes such as the \$50 Billion in RDT&E costs lost due to cancelled major programs over the last decade cannot be repeated.³⁸ The rapid fielding of the MRAP vehicle, while a great success story and absolutely the right thing to do, was a cost of \$35 Billion³⁹ in unplanned dollars that may not be feasible if the wrong acquisition decisions are made.

Deciding what the Army will do in terms of mission sets will be extremely useful in procurement and future research and development efforts. Formations oriented on Defend, Shape and Respond tasks need less main battle systems such as tanks, infantry fighting vehicles and self-propelled artillery as current versions of those platforms will be sufficient to defeat current enemy systems. However, the next generation wheeled vehicle will be of the highest priority. This course of action provides an opportunity for recapitalization of the MRAP fleet, which is of little value in a combined arms maneuver, high intensity conflict oriented Army. Aviation procurement would be weighted heavily towards utility and observation platforms.

A force pursuing a Deter and Defeat strategy would place main combat systems as the highest priority. Upgrading the current fleet of tanks and infantry fighting vehicles and development and procurement of the next generation ground combat vehicle are priority requirements for this course of action. Another significant investment will be development of hardened and mobile command and control system that enable the

Army to communicate effectively on the move and over long distances. Aviation procurement in this course of action is heavily weighted towards attack platforms.

Focusing the Army on either Shape and Respond missions or combined arms maneuver over the next decade will optimize limited procurement and R&D dollars and allow the Army to equip formations properly and invest wisely in the future. A full spectrum approach to equipping runs the risk of insufficient funding to properly equip the force for either option in the near term and large sunk costs on future systems that are not realized.

National Guard and Reserve:

The most critical question in regards to National Guard and Reserve forces is to determine what tasks these units can and cannot do effectively. Prosecuting the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan without Guard and Reserve forces would not have been possible. There are numerous examples of these citizen Soldiers serving heroically at the individual through Division level. There are also significant limitations to what these forces can realistically be expected to do given limitations on training time and opportunities.

Guard and Reserve Soldiers are older by rank than active duty forces. They also frequently have more developed and unique skill sets such as agriculture, construction, business and medical. This added maturity and development related education and experience translates well into COIN and stability operations and missions.

Conversely, the ability of Guard and Reserve units to gain and achieve proficiency at combined arms maneuver is significantly limited by lack of training time and experience of key leaders. With dedicated train up and 30-90 days in theater experience, Guard and Reserve units are able to perform combat tasks with proficiency similar to that of active duty forces at the company level and below.⁴⁰ The main challenge with combined arms maneuver and the Guard and Reserve lies in the experience level of critical field grade officers, specifically staff majors, and Battalion and Brigade level commanders. Combined arms maneuver depends on the ability of units to synchronize Army assets and Joint forces and capabilities in time, space and purpose in order to mass combat power. This is an extremely complex challenge and requires extensive training and experience. The ability to execute effectively at the tactical level depends on Brigade and Battalion commanders and field grade staff officers and their ability to command and control. Despite unquestionable intelligence, selflessness and patriotism, Guard and Reserve field grade officers rarely have the training time and opportunities to develop the proficiency their active duty counterparts develop over ten to twenty years of active duty service.

In a Defend, Shape and Respond course of action, Guard and Reserve forces could be assigned support and stability tasks with an emphasis on development, governance and training of host nation forces. The movement of a portion of heavy mechanized units from the active force to the reserve would also be feasible, especially if they were constrained to company size elements designed and trained to augment active duty Battalion and Brigade size units when employed in high intensity conflict. If the Army pursues a Defend, Deter and Defeat approach, the Guard and Reserve could

first be responsible for supporting and, with longer training and deployment timelines, thickening and augmenting active duty combined arms maneuver forces. The Guard and Reserve will also be able to leverage stability and COIN strengths and maintain units for these types of missions while the active Army focuses on high intensity conflict. Moving any portion of active duty heavy BCTs to the guard and/or Reserve would not be prudent in the Deter and Defeat course of action.

Mission Command:

Reconciling national strategic guidance with the realities of the country's fiscal situation and future defense funding over the next decade is a complex problem with vital national interests potentially at stake. The Army will be required to make difficult decisions on its way ahead and then shape the discussions and decision making at Department of Defense and National levels. Once a course of action is approved, the Army will have to execute that plan in the face of real and emerging threats and in an extremely dynamic operating environment.

Fortunately, the Army is well prepared and fully capable of meeting this challenge. The Army should treat this challenge as a major operation and "fight" it just as it has fought recent wars and conducted major operations successfully in the past. The Army conducts operations by utilizing a doctrinal concept called Mission Command. "Mission command employs the art of command and the science of control to enable commanders, supported by staffs, to integrate all the warfighting functions and enable agile and adaptive commanders, leaders and organizations."⁴¹ Mission

Command requires Army leaders to understand, visualize, describe, direct, lead and assess operations. Army Doctrinal Publication 3.0, Operations describes the process:⁴²

Under this philosophy, commanders drive the operations process through their activities of understand, visualize, describe, direct, lead, and assess. They develop teams, both within their own organizations and with joint, interagency, and multinational partners. Commanders inform and influence audiences, inside and outside their organizations. The commander leads the staff's tasks under the science of control.

Regardless of how hard the Army works to address the challenges of the next decade and what decisions are made, the problem will require constant monitoring and adjustments will be continuous. The Army has both the doctrinal approach and the competent, confident and agile leadership to succeed at this critical task.

Conclusion

Current National Security and Military strategic guidance assigns the military a wide ranging set of missions and tasks that can be generally grouped into five requirements; Defend the Homeland, Deter Aggression, Defeat Adversaries, Shape the Environment, and Respond to Crisis. While these requirements are all valid, they are unconstrained by the current fiscal situation. Depending on the outcome of ongoing budget debate and decision making by the executive and legislative branches, the Department of Defense will see reductions of between \$350 Billion and \$1 Trillion over the next decade and a sustained funding rate of between 1.6% and 2.6% of GDP.

Due to this mismatch, the Army will be required to develop plans for doing less with less. Viable options exist including a reduced full spectrum capability; focusing on defend, shape and respond; or focusing on defend, deter and defeat. All three have advantages, disadvantages, and associated risk. The course of action selected will have major implications for Army long term manning, training and equipping efforts as well as the future role of National Guard and Reserve forces.

The Army is fully capable of meeting this challenge. By operationalizing the problem and employing the proven doctrinal concept of mission command, Army leaders will be able to make sound decisions and move the Army forward. The Army will do its share to help the country solve its fiscal crisis and continue to defend our Nation and win its wars.

Endnotes

¹ Paul R. Viotti, *American Foreign Policy and National Security* (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall), 149.

² Barack H. Obama, *National Security Strategy* (Washington, DC: The White House, May 2010), Introduction Letter.

³ Ibid., 1.

⁴ Ibid., 17.

⁵ Ibid., 14.

⁶ Robert M. Gates, *Quadrennial Defense Review* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, February 2010), iii.

⁷ Ibid., v.

⁸ Ibid., vii-ix.

⁹ Ibid., x.

¹⁰ Michael M. Mullen, *The National Military Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: The Joint Staff, February 2011), Introduction Letter.

¹¹ Ibid., 3-4.

¹² Ibid., 5-6.

¹³ Ibid., 8.

¹⁴ Ibid., 8-9.

¹⁵ Ibid., 10-16.

¹⁶ Ibid., 16-20.

¹⁷ Barack H. Obama, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities For 21st Century Defense* (Washington, DC: The White House, January 2012), Introduction Letter.

¹⁸ Ibid., 2-3.

¹⁹ Ibid., 4-6.

²⁰ Ibid., 6-9.

²¹ David W. Barno, Nora Bensahel and Travis Sharp, *Hard Choices: Responsible Defense in an Age of Austerity* (Washington, DC: Center for a New American Security, October 2011), 23.

²² Craig Whitlock, "Panetta Sketches Out Strategy On Budget Cuts," *Washington Post*, October 11, 2011.

²³ Barno, "Hard choices," 8.

²⁴ Cindy Williams, *The Future Affordability of U.S. National Security* (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, October 2011), 2.

²⁵ Ibid., 3.

²⁶ Ibid., 6.

²⁷ Todd Harrison, *Five Facts About Defense and Sequestration* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, November, 2011), 2.

²⁸ Williams, "Future Affordability," 12.

²⁹ Ibid., 13-14.

³⁰ A force capable of operating across the full spectrum and range of operations to include offense, defense, stability and support.

³¹ Army Doctrinal Publication 3.0 (October 2011) defines Combined Arms Maneuver as "The application of the elements of combat power in unified action to defeat enemy ground forces; to seize, occupy, and defend land areas; and to achieve physical, temporal, and psychological advantages over the enemy to seize and exploit the initiative.

³² Author's opinion based on personal experience and interactions with Soldiers during training and operations since 2003.

³³ Michael O'Hanlon, "End Two-War Planning for U.S. Ground Forces," *Defense News*, December 19, 2011.

³⁴ Huba Wass de Czege, "The Limitations of Warfare by Air and Naval Forces Only," *Army Magazine*, May 2011, 45-52.

³⁵ Joint Publication 1.02 (November 2011) defines Security Force Assistance as "The Department of Defense activities that contribute to unified action by the US Government to support the development of the capacity and capability of foreign security forces and their supporting institutions.

³⁶ Army Doctrinal Publication 3.0 (October 2011) defines Wide Area Security as "The application of the elements of combat power in unified action to protect populations, forces, infrastructure, and activities; to deny the enemy positions of advantage; and to consolidate gains in order to retain the initiative.

³⁷ Harrison, "Five Facts," 2.

³⁸ Ibid., 3.

³⁹ Ibid., 3.

⁴⁰ Author's opinion based on personal experience to include operational control of National Guard and Reserve Forces and operating under the operational control of National Guard higher headquarters as a Task Force and Brigade Combat Team commander in combat.

⁴¹ Martin E. Dempsey, "Mission Command," *Army Magazine*, January 2011, 44.

⁴² U.S. Department of the Army, *Unified Land Operations*, Army Doctrinal Publication 3.0 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, October, 2011), 13.